

BOCES INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY NEWSLETTER

❄ December 2011 ❄

Happy Holidays!

Fox Meadow
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December's Theme
Writing Instruction

Writing Across the Curriculum

Marianne Rodriguez

In order to help students improve their writing skills, educators need to emphasize writing across the curriculum. Research shows that U.S. workers write more today than at any time in history, and schools need to prepare students to write well for many different audiences (National Writing Project & Nagin, 2006). If students see an emphasis on writing, the time is well spent because writing fosters learning in all disciplines. Students in math, social studies, or science classes will learn more about those subjects by engaging with them through writing.

Some ideas for writing in content classes:

- ❖ **Learning Logs** - As students start class, they are given a prompt to which they respond for a few minutes in writing. The task is not designed as a problem per se, but rather to encourage students to focus on the content class.
- ❖ **Think – Write – Share** - Have students write their answers before answering a question. This strategy heightens student engagement in writing. Concurrently, students are held accountable for their own understanding.
- ❖ **Note-taking/Note-making**- Have students make notes on personal reflections as they copy notes from the board. This honors both writing and content knowledge. It encourages students to make connections between new concepts and previously learned material and their personal experiences.
- ❖ **Shared Writing** – Teachers guide students in writing about a unit they studied. As students are engaged in revising, they improve the writing while extending their thinking in that content area. Because the ideas are constructed through group interaction, students help one another learn to communicate their knowledge.

Taking Initiative, Principal Leadership, November 2010
Integrating Writing and Mathematics, The Reading Teacher, April 2011

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It's ALIVE...it's a Live Binder!

Our cache of web resources can now be found online in a "Live Binder." You no longer have to look back through old newsletters to find a particular resource. Choose the tab pertaining to the type of resource you are looking for and then peruse the sub tabs. You can use the sites within the binder or click the links to be directed to the specific site.

Some great writing resources to check out this month include...

- ❖ Read, Write, Think [Student Interactive]
- ❖ Telescopic Text [Sentence Expansion and Fluency]
- ❖ Magnetic Poetry [Great for SMARTBoard Interaction]
- ❖ Teaching that Makes Sense [Teacher Resources]
- ❖ Mixed Ink [Collaborative Writing]



Check it out... [BOCES INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY BINDER](#)

Access Key: BOCES

BOCES Instructional Technology - Web Resources

Vocabulary Resources

Writing Resources

Read, Write, Think

Telescopic Text

Magnetic Poetry

Some More Writing Ideas

Alanna Donohue

"If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot."
— Stephen King

As educators, we are often left wondering how to best help students in their journey to be a more effective writer. All too often, teachers will look at a page of student work and not know where to begin the process. Turning students into writers can seem like a daunting task. Aside from giving students the opportunity to write, what else can be done? Perhaps a little taste of the 6+1 Traits of Writing can help. The traits include: **Ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions, and presentations**. Each trait is taught sequentially through mini-lessons and mentored texts.

- ❖ Try targeted mini-lessons on issues specific to your students. For example, if you find that half your class has trouble with writing complete sentences, do a series of five minute mini-lessons on what a complete sentence is.
- ❖ Have writing conferences with individual students that includes a 2-3 minute review of that lesson to be sure it's cemented in their minds.
- ❖ Give plenty of small practice before you give a large writing assignment that requires a certain skill.
- ❖ Have students do revisions for **one** skill each time you hand a draft back.

Works Cited

Culham. (2003). *6+1 Traits of Writing*. Scholastic.
King. (2000). *On Writing*. Scribner.

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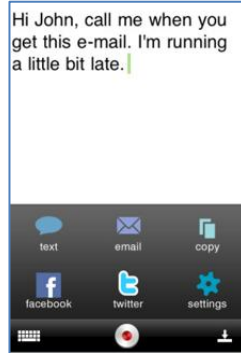
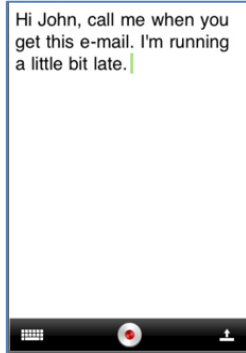
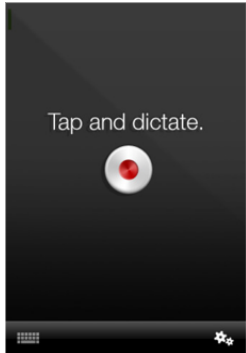
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Mobile Apps



Dragon Dictation®

Dragon Dictation is a voice recognition application that allows you to speak and instantly see the text.



Common Core Standards



View the Common Core Standards in one convenient FREE App. Quickly find standards by subject, grade and subject category.



Evernote



Evernote helps you remember anything and everything. From notes to ideas to snapshots to recordings, put it all into Evernote and it will synchronize from your phone to your computer.

Tis the New Computer Season...

Get Microsoft Office for Less Than \$10!

Microsoft HOME USE PROGRAM



The Department of Information Technology is happy to announce that you are now eligible to participate in Microsoft's Software Assurance Home Use Program (HUP). Many employees over the years have been working with the latest and greatest copy of Microsoft OFFICE at work only to go home and work with nothing or a very old copy. This program enables you to get a licensed copy of Microsoft® Office 2010 to install and use on your home computer for less than \$10!! This price is awesome compared to the typical \$100 Student/Teacher edition or the \$400-500 off-the-shelf copy.

Under the Home Use Program, you and our other employees who are users of qualifying applications at work (e.g. Office Enterprise) may acquire a licensed copy of OFFICE 2010 to install and use on a home computer. You may continue using this software while you are under our employment and as long as the corresponding software you use at work has active Software Assurance coverage. This is not an added cost to you since BOCES' pays for Software Assurance coverage from Microsoft.

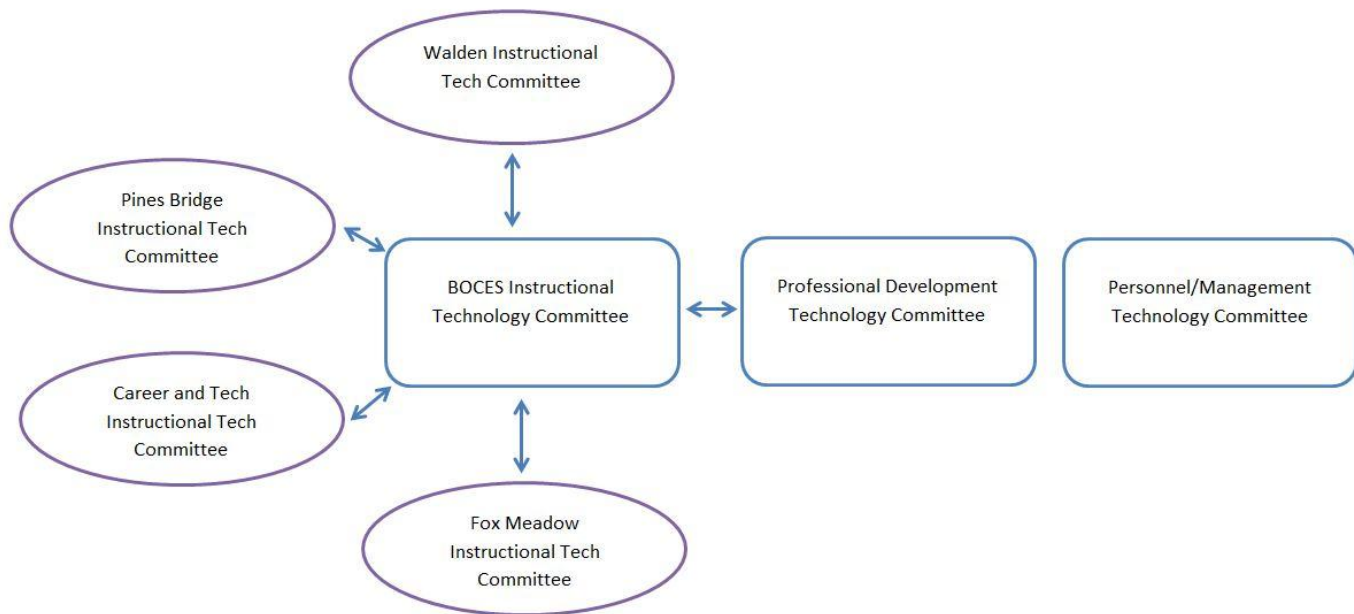
(Maldonado, Carlos. "RE: Microsoft OFFICE 2010 now available for your home use!" Message to BOCES staff. 9 Dec. 2010. Email.)

Contact Cathy Armisto at carmisto@pnwboces.org for more information on how to access this deal.

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BOCES Technology Committees...A System for Success



You may have been hearing about different technology committees throughout the organization. If so, you're probably left wondering what these committees are all about! The former BOCES-wide Technology Committee has been split into three separate committees (outlined in blue) with distinct roles. Here is an overview of the committees "in a nutshell"...

Program Committees:

Committee members are responsible for collecting and disseminating information to/from colleagues in their respective programs. Best practices and resources are shared, as well as any technology concerns.

BOCES Instructional Technology Committee:

Representatives from each program committee meet to discuss what is going on in the various BOCES programs. Members discuss best practices and share resources, as well as participate in shared problem solving.

Professional Development Technology Committee:

This committee works closely with the BOCES Instructional Technology Committee in order to plan and implement appropriate professional development based on student and program needs.

Personnel/Management Technology Committee:

Comprised of Superintendents, Information Technology, Human Resources and/or Business Office personnel, this committee identifies technology needs as they related to organizational management. The committee meets as needed.

All of these committees communicate with members of the overall Staff Meeting, which is responsible for organizational oversight, review of technology applications, allocation of resources, and alignment of technology resources throughout the organization.